

## Forgive Pt 3 Forgive your brethren as Christ has forgiven you

This is the third and final teaching on the word “forgive”. In our previous study we covered three points- (I) Jesus taught His disciples to pray- asking the Father to forgive their sin, as they are forgiven, (ii) Jesus healed the sick and forgave sins, (iii) today: we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ. In this teaching we will cover an additional three points: (I) In the OT brethren sought forgiveness before and after the law, (ii) Jesus taught- if a brother trespass against us- forgive him, and (iii) Forgive your brethren lest such a one be swallowed up with overmuch sorry.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

### 1. In the OT brethren sought forgiveness prior to the law and under the law

Prior to the law-

Joseph was asked to forgive the trespass (the sin) of his brethren

“So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive, I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren, and their sin; for they did unto thee evil: and now, we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him” (Gen.50: 17).

Esau hated his brother Jacob because he stole his birthright, so he sort to slay him

“And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother Jacob Gen.27:41

Jacob took a gift to Esau to find grace in his sight

[1] And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men. And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the two handmaids.

[3] And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times...

[4] And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.

[8] And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

[9] And Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself. Gen33:1, 3, 4, 8, 9  
Therefore, there is a link between forgiveness and giving a gift.

Grace is found in their sight when the gift is received and hence forgiveness shown

[10] And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face...and thou wast pleased with me.

[15] And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find grace in the sight of my lord.

[16] So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir. Genesis 33:10, 15, 16

Therefore, in giving a gift Jacob and in him receiving the gift

To find grace in another’s sight is to fulfil their request (in this case to receive the gift)

[21] And the king said unto Joab, Behold now, I have done this thing: go therefore, bring the young man Absalom again.

[22] And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found grace in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant. 2 Samuel 14:21-22

Under the law-

Abigail besought David’s forgiveness for her trespasses

[23] And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground,

[27] And now this blessing which thine handmaid hath brought unto my lord, let it even be given unto the young men that follow my lord.

However, there was no law that required a man to forgive his brother. Only if there was a controversy with another, the priest and judges would judge between them.

“Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days” (Deut.19: 17). See also 1 Samuel 2:25.

## 2. Jesus taught: if your brother trespass and repents, forgive him

[3] Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

[4] And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him. (Lk 17:3, 4)

Till seventy times

[21] Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

[35] So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses. (Matt.18: 21, 35).

If you are praying and have ought against any- forgive them, that your Father in heaven may forgive you

“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. (Mark 11:25)

There is a link between forgive in Mark and the outcome of forgiveness - being reconciliation in Matthew

[23]...if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

[24] Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. Matthew 5:23-24

In our previous teaching we established that this instruction is not for us today. Can think of any proof? How about- our sins today are forgiven, washed by the blood when we believe the gospel of Christ-crucified.

There is link between forgive and love

“Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little” (Luke 7:47)

Not surprising Jesus taught: love one another

[34] A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you...

[35] By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. John 13:34-35

## 3. If any cause you grief - forgive them: lest such a one be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow

[5] But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all.

[6] Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many.

[7] So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. (2 Cor.2:5-7)

See the link between sin and sorrow- Jer.30: 15- “Why criest thou for thine affliction? thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity: because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee”.

When you forgive them you confirm your love toward them (and we are to love our brethren - 1 Thes.4: 9

“Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him” (2 Cor.2: 8)

We are obedient to the word of God when we forgive, as Paul also forgave those in the early church for their sakes, and he forgave in the person of Christ.

[9] For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.

[10] To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; (2 Corinthians 2:9-10)

There is a link between grief and wound

“Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear it” (Jer.10:19)

There are situations where we sin against the weak we wound their weak conscience and sin against Christ

[10] For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

[11] And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

[12] But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.

1 Corinthians 8:10-12

We are to forgive one another if any have a quarrel against another even as Christ forgave us  
“Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye” (Col.3: 13).

Illustration

I will never forget a discussion with a person that is part of my family albeit remotely connected by marriage. I was talking about forgiving, in the context of adultery and the woman (who was of this world) did not know what it meant to forgive another, nor did she see nor recognise the benefit in forgiveness. Even when I provided an off the cuff meaning from scripture, she could not see, nor understand. And that has been evident in other non Christians who have been hurt unable to forgive, and their unforgiveness bears ill-health in their vessel. For those non-Christians who recognise the need to forgive, and have a worldly understanding what it is, they often do not have a clue how to forgive for they themselves are yet to experience the creator God’s love and forgiveness through His only begotten Son.

Questions to think about.

i) Why do we forgive our brethren? ii) How do we forgive? iii) How do we know we have forgiven?

Our answers from the scriptures.

i) We are to forgive one another because Christ forgave us- Col.3: 13- “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye”.

We forgive our brethren-

Lest they be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow- 2 Cor 2: 7- “So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow”.

Lest Satan get an advantage of us

“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. (2 Corinthians 2:11)

ii) The only way to answer the question of how to forgive, is to look at how God forgives us.

God forgives us, He is ready to pardon because He is gracious, merciful, of great kindness and slow to anger  
“And refused to obey, neither were mindful of thy wonders that thou didst among them; but hardened their necks, and in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage: but thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and forsookest them not” (Neh.9: 17).

The end result of God forgiving our sin: He remembers our sin no more (they are let go)

“And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jer.31: 34).

iii) When we grieve our brother both of us can feel sorrow. Forgiveness facilitates healing for each.

a) the sinner - our verse says- the person grieved shows their love when they forgive their brother that sinned against them. After forgiveness is extended the sinner will not be overcome with sorrow, and  
b) the one grieved by the sinner can be sorrowful as established by a link between grief and sorrow. Hence grief caused by sin could also manifest sorrow- Jeremiah 45:3 “Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the LORD hath added grief to my sorrow...” And their forgiveness helps to work through their grief and sorrow.

We will know we have forgiven our brother because the sorrow that could result from our unforgiveness will no longer occupy our mind

“And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest: but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind” (Deut.28: 65)..

There is a link between grief and hurt and wounds- Jer.10: 19“Woe is me for my hurt! my wound is grievous: but I said, Truly this is a grief, and I must bear”. Therefore, you will know you have forgiven your brother if their sin that causes you grief and hurt, no longer affects you.

Let us forgive our brethren when they sin against us, when we have a quarrel against them. Let us show our love, being tenderhearted and kind toward our brethren, fully aware of our own failings and God’s forgiveness to us for Christ’s sake.- Eph.4: 32 “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Let us forgive by letting go their sins- remembering them no more, to ensure they are not swallowed up by the sorrow, and neither are we. That Satan no longer can get an advantage over us, and divide us. Amen!